

Virtual Gateway News

A Publication of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services Virtual Gateway



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What is the Virtual Gateway?

The Virtual Gateway is an Internet portal that provides the general public, medical providers, community-based organizations, and government agencies with online access to health and human services. Over 23,000 individuals, representing more than 1,600 organizations, currently use the Virtual Gateway to conduct business with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and deliver much needed services to the people of the Commonwealth.

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JudyAnn Bigby, M.D.

Welcome from the Secretary

It might be summer, but the team at the Virtual Gateway has been hard at work bringing new and better services to the residents of the Commonwealth.

Six new business services will be added to the Virtual Gateway in the coming months. One of those, the Massachusetts System for Advance Registration, is a secure database of pre-credentialed health care professionals who have agreed to volunteer their services in the event of a public health emergency. Another, the Electronic Disease Surveillance System, is a communicable disease monitoring tool designed to serve public health professionals. Read on for details about our new Streamlined Renewals application covered a little later in this newsletter.

Please visit us online at www.mass.gov/vg for more information and additional updates. We will continue to keep you informed as the Virtual Gateway adds new services to better serve the residents of the Commonwealth. Enjoy the rest of your summer and watch for our fall newsletter.

JudyAnn Bigby, M.D.
Secretary of Health and Human Services

Featured Program: Enterprise Invoice/Service Management (EIM/ESM)

July has been a busy month for the EIM/ESM service! EIM/ESM is an online billing and reporting service that has streamlined invoice submission, approval and payment via the Internet for Purchase of Service providers. This month, a new release of EIM/ESM (Release 4.5) was deployed, offering many new features sought by agency and provider users. These updates enrich the amendment request process, simplify key data entry requirements, and expand

management reporting options. For complete information regarding the new features of Release 4.5, [click here](#).

Also this month, new contracts are being added to EIM/ESM. More than 270 contracts, valued at over \$139 million, are currently being activated. As part of this growth, the Virtual Gateway Team will welcome more than 50 new provider organizations that will begin using the service in August to bill against contracts held with EOHHS agencies.

Many learning opportunities exist for these new providers. Our latest offerings target those new to unit rate billing, one of the contract types that EIM/ESM supports. To learn more, take a look at our Road Map to Unit Rate Readiness [via this link](#). We are excited to provide workshops for this new group of users as we reach the conclusion of a very productive summer!

To better accommodate user needs, EIM/ESM hours of availability have been extended. The service may now be accessed from 7:00 AM until 1:00 AM all days except for Wednesday, when the service is available from 7:00 AM until 7:00 PM.

Coming Soon: Streamlined Renewals for Health Care!

Soon, there will be an easy-to-use, online function added to the Virtual Gateway that will enable providers to assist targeted Commonwealth Care-only households in submitting their annual reviews. Future plans call for the tool to be used for Health Safety Net and MassHealth members as well.

This new feature, called “Streamlined Renewals” (SLR), will be accessible by authorized providers through Virtual Gateway’s My Account Page (MAP) service and will make the annual review process easier and more efficient for members. It will also significantly reduce the number of paper Eligibility Review Verification (ERV) forms currently received daily by MassHealth.

Using SLR, providers will be able to view (assuming proper security authorizations) information that MassHealth currently has on file for their member and the members’ household. Working with a provider, a member is asked screening questions to determine whether the household is appropriate for using SLR. If so, with the provider’s assistance, the member is able to modify certain information that has changed in the past year and submit it electronically to MassHealth. The electronic submission satisfies MassHealth’s annual eligibility review requirement for the household.

Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston Medical Center, and Codman Square Community Health Center all recently completed a successful pilot of SLR, using it to assist Commonwealth Care-only household members submit their annual reviews.

Efforts are underway this summer to roll SLR out to all MAP users statewide. This phase of the roll-out will allow all MAP users to assist members of many Commonwealth Care-only households submit their annual reviews online. Future expansions of the SLR process will include MassHealth, Health Safety Net, and mixed-coverage households.

This new Virtual Gateway enhancement should go a long way toward providing MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, and Health Safety Net members with the highest quality service as efficiently as possible.

Stay tuned for more news about this new online renewal system, SLR!

From the CTO: Access and Identity Management Service (AIMS)

The 13 business services provided through the Virtual Gateway share a single security service. The security service, otherwise known as AIMS, ensures that users logging into the system have both access to the appropriate services and a secure means of viewing client information. By sharing the same service, across all Internet applications within EOHHS, the Secretariat avoids investing in redundant programs. Eventually, VG users will have a single user ID and password for all of the business applications they use.

In early May, the Virtual Gateway upgraded AIMS. The new version of AIMS is more robust than the previous security service and provides better audits and reporting regarding user activity. Users may notice new directions for setting and resetting passwords; all of these are part of AIMS' improved data security and account management features.

The upgraded AIMS service also enables users to reset their own passwords. This development is a marked improvement for users who, prior to AIMS, had to call the Customer Service team to reset a password. As the VG community becomes accustomed to the new AIMS service, more self-service options will become available. In particular, an upgrade planned for this fall will bring "delegated administration" to users. This feature will enable users to self-register and will allow provider organizations to manage access for their own users.

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